



# Recycle This! Newsletter

Newsletter of the Maine State Planning Office, Waste Management & Recycling Program \* December 2002

## Highlights from Maine Recycles Week 2002

Over 40 municipalities, schools, and businesses organized events to celebrate Maine Recycles Week during November 8-15. Events ranged from the traditional open houses, workshops, and school presentations to the innovative “can wars” (competitive collection of returnable containers) and solar/hybrid vehicle demonstrations. Also, for the fourth straight year, participating schools were entered into a contest for cash and educational prizes.



### School Participation Contest

Over 30 schools from across the state participated in Maine Recycles Week (MRW) 2002. Participation varied greatly from school to school and ranged from simple participation in the Poster Contest, to complex multi-grade celebrations and the creation of new recycling programs.

The Steering Committee reviewed all school participation and selected the top 3 schools to receive the \$500 grand prize awards. From the remaining schools, the Steering Committee randomly drew the names of 5 schools to receive \$200 cash prizes and three additional schools to receive free presentations of “Too Much Trash” from the Chewonki Foundation. Congratulations to the following winners:

**\$500 Prizes:** Zippel Elementary School (Presque Isle), Raymond Elementary School, St. George School (Tenants Harbor)

**\$200 Prizes:** Governor Anderson Elementary School (Belfast), Friendship Village School, Pleasant Hill School (Scarborough), Noble High School (North Berwick), Jordan Acres School (Brunswick)

**Chewonki Presentations:** Windsor School, Mt. Blue High School (Farmington), Sedgwick Elementary School

### Feedback from a participating school:

*“We appreciate ...this week of focus upon Maine students’ and their families’ opportunities to recycle, reduce, and reuse. The resources available to us make it easy and fun to spend a week consciously attending to this extremely important aspect of educating our children and their families and reaffirming our commitment to recycling in our school community. Thank you!”*

—Sea Chauvin, Governor Anderson Elementary School

### MRW 2002 Poster Contest

The Steering Committee received over 1000 entries in the 3rd annual MRW 2002 Poster Contest. The committee reviewed all of the entries and chose 12 posters to be included in the *Recycle Maine! 2003 Calendar*. In addition, one poster was selected as the top entry and will be featured on the Maine Recycles Week 2003 poster as well as the cover of the 2003 calendar. To view all of the entries that were selected for inclusion in the calendar, visit the web site at [www.recyclemaine.com](http://www.recyclemaine.com). Also, be sure to look for your copy of the calendar in the mail in late December!

### Pledge to Buy Recycled Content Paper

As part of MRW 2002, businesses, schools, and municipalities were encouraged to make the pledge to purchase recycled content paper and letterhead containing a minimum of 30% post consumer recycled material. Those who made the pledge were recognized on the MRW web site at and received free information on recycled content paper sources and general tips for buying recycled.



*For a complete listing of  
Maine Recycles Week 2002  
Events and Sponsors,  
please visit the web site at  
[www.recyclemaine.com](http://www.recyclemaine.com)*

# Recycling Grant Money to be Available in 2003



On November 5<sup>th</sup>, Maine voters demonstrated their desire for a cleaner environment by passing the environmental bond that, among other things, provides \$600,000 in funding to the State Planning Office (SPO) to support municipal recycling efforts and \$900,000 to assist in the development of household hazardous waste (HHW) infrastructure. These funds offer the opportunity for communities to reduce both the volume and toxicity of the waste stream they currently manage.

## ***Recycling Capital Investment Grants -- \$600,000***

These grant awards will be competitive and will require a minimum 50% local match for qualifying projects. Communities and programs that have already started, or are about to start, their budget process for the next fiscal year, should be sure to include funds necessary to cover at least 50% of the considered grant proposal in budget discussions now, or plan to include them as articles for the annual town meeting. (Articles are needed to expend money and to accept grants funds from the state.) In kind contributions in labor or land *will not* be counted toward the local match.

### **Priorities**

Priority will be given to:

- Regional efforts (over single public entity programs);
- Proposals that focus on increasing the volume of the materials recycled or expand their programs to include new materials;
- Composting initiatives, including efforts to pull more categories and larger volumes of organics from the waste stream at the community level and through innovative backyard programs;
- Communities that make provisions for school and public building recycling; and
- Proposals that include a public education component (a reduced state share applies to this).

## ***HHW Infrastructure Grants -- \$900,000***

Although the specifics of this program have not been finalized, SPO is considering two categories of competitive HHW grants being offered to public entities in the spring of 2003:

**A.** One for facilities for those waste items that are hard

to manage but recyclable; and

**B.** Another for collection and storage centers for general HHW.

In addition, all grant proposals will be required to contain a public education and awareness component to help the public safely manage their HHW, and most importantly, reduce the amount of HHW they generate.

**A. HHW Recycling Grants.** These grants would be used to develop new or expand existing recycling infrastructure for specific hard to manage but recyclable wastes. The goal would be to divert these wastes into a recycling infrastructure, saving HHW programs for materials that can't readily be recycled, and lessening the operational costs of HHW management, while reducing the toxicity of the municipal waste stream. For example:

- Waste Oil, Antifreeze collection. Grants could be used to assist with the cost of necessary storage tanks, along with secondary containment, rigid hook up, and pad, installed to Maine DEP specifications as set out in current regulations.

- Unwanted Paint. Grants would fund facilities that provide storage of unwanted paint from households for reuse and recycling.

SPO and DEP are committed to continuing both the Mercury Products and the Universal Waste Recycling Assistance Program. A

portion of the bond funds will be set aside for this effort. This program features:

- Mercury products storage sheds built and delivered at no cost to the public entity for the collection and storage of fluorescent bulbs, all mercury containing devices, and PCB containing lighting ballasts.
- Cash grants for public entities to establish or expand Universal Waste central accumulation facilities for the storage and recycling of Cathode Ray Tube containing devices (computer monitors and TVs, as well as computers) along with mercury products.
- Universal Waste Consolidation Facility grants directed at programs with large-scale collection and handling infrastructure and operations already in place. These are programs that might be appropriate for expansion and acceptance of materials from smaller facilities in order to obtain improved efficiencies and better pricing from vendors.

Applicants will be able to consolidate their proposals into

## Grants (cont'd from page 2)

a single application. The definition of infrastructure is flexible, to meet the needs of the individual program or community. However, the proposed infrastructure shall meet all safeguards to guarantee no release of products into the environment and meet all current worker safety standards and environmental regulations.

**B. General HHW Facility grants.** These grants are anticipated for the construction of a permanent, secure, operational HHW collection facility, permitted and licensed by the Maine DEP. All studies have shown that permanent programs: collect more waste; result in heightened public awareness about waste reduction; and have higher participation levels than one-day events. The competitive cost-shared grant could cover:

- Site security, including fencing and gates
- Safe storage structures that meet all local, state, and federal requirements for the storage of hazardous waste, including the separation of certain wastes by characteristic or chemistry
- A sorting/receiving area
- Proposals for reuse areas within the facility could also be considered

Selection criteria may include population served, level of existing solid waste infrastructure and operations, experience with HHW collections, history of regional cooperation, the level of support demonstrated by the solid waste and recycling staff, by citizens, and by elected and appointed public officials. The goal will be to secure public partners who are confident, competent, willing to make the long-term commitment to a large permanent regional program that will successfully reduce toxics in the waste stream, and who can see the benefits in such a program.

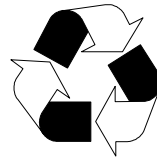
### Timeline

SPO will mail a notification letter to all municipalities and programs during December. Grant application forms and instructions will be mailed out in late winter, once the bond funds have been transferred to SPO. SPO anticipates allowing 60 days for completed applications to be returned. Application review will take place in May with award letters out to applicants by early June 2003.

**Additional grant information will be provided at SPO Winter Workshops!**

*(See page 4 for more details.)*

## Measuring Solid Waste & Recycling



The data provided annually by Maine municipalities is essential in measuring and tracking recycling efforts in Maine.

Recycling efforts are traditionally measured and presented as the **adjusted recycling rate**, calculated from data provided to the State Planning Office by the municipalities. The formula used to determine the adjusted recycling rate is liberal in that many factors are added together to calculate the rate, including 15 categories of municipal recyclables; tons of municipal solid waste; 8 categories of bulky waste materials and recyclables; off-site commercial waste generated and recycled; credit for bottles managed under Maine's 'Bottle Bill'; and 6 categories of composting activities.

In order to provide an additional measurement tool for the evaluation of municipal solid waste generation and recycling, SPO also provides various **Per Person** calculations in the following categories: municipal trash generated; recyclables managed; bulky waste generated; bulky waste recycled; total material recycled; total municipal solid waste; dollars per person; dollars per ton of solid waste managed.

### Graphs & Charts

SPO recently created an Excel spreadsheet for each town and region that

presents eight different solid waste data categories, showing how the program has changed from 1993 to 2001. Graphs were also prepared for the following categories: tons of municipal solid waste; tons municipally recycled; total tons recycled; the calculated municipal recycling rate; bulky waste generated; and, tons of bulky waste recycled. The trends of these graphs show the history of solid waste and recycling over a nine-year period for communities.

With this additional analysis, SPO hopes to provide communities with a more complete view of their efforts. The 'per person' data also provides a more level field for comparing municipal efforts with the calculated statewide averages. SPO sent these analyses along with a brief narrative description of the program to communities in November.

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*In 2001, the statewide average of municipal trash generation was 0.4264 tons per person, and the statewide average of municipal recyclables processed was 0.0731 tons per person.*

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Waste Management & Recycling Program  
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Augusta, ME 04333-0038  
1-800-662-4545 or 207-287-8050  
[www.recyclemaine.com](http://www.recyclemaine.com)

## Governor's Waste Reduction Awards



Yes, it's that time of year again - time to begin thinking about nominations for the 2003 Governor's Waste Reduction Awards. Sponsored by the State Planning Office, these awards are designed to recognize outstanding efforts by public organizations to promote solid waste reduction efforts in Maine.

Public Sector nominees include municipalities, local regional associations, non-profit organizations and state agencies. Waste reduction is defined as "the design, manufacture and use of products so as to reduce the quantity and/or toxicity of waste produced when the products reach the end of their useful lives."

If you know of an organization that should be recognized for their efforts in reducing waste generation, or would like more information, please contact George MacDonald at 287-5759 or send your nomination via e-mail at [george.macdonald@state.me.us](mailto:george.macdonald@state.me.us)

## Coming Soon

The **Maine Resource Recovery Association** will hold its **Annual Solid Waste Conference & Recyclathon** on **April 28 & 29** at the **Sable Oaks** in **South Portland**. Call MRRA at 942-6772 for more information.

**SPO** will be holding a series of **Winter Workshops** in **February**. Topics to be covered include: the upcoming recycling and HHW grant rounds (*See page 2 for more details*), strategies for increased capture of recycling tonnages, and more. Look for more info in the mail and on the web site at [www.recyclemaine.com](http://www.recyclemaine.com).

*Happy Holidays from  
the Waste Management  
& Recycling Program!*



# Holiday Waste Reduction & Recycling Tips



The holiday season, with all of its associated buying, wrapping and celebrating, substantially increases the amount of waste that we generate. There are, however, many opportunities for the consumer to reduce, reuse and recycle the remnants of holiday cheer. Listed below are some tips for reducing your household's waste during the holiday season.

## GIVE YOUR CHRISTMAS TREE A SECOND CHANCE

Buy an evergreen - in a pot or with a root-ball wrapped in burlap - to transplant after New Year's. Dig a hole about 2' across by 1.5' deep before the ground freezes and store the soil in garage or basement. To plant, remove from container (with burlap, just loosen ties; burlap will decompose on its own); replace soil so top of roots sits lightly aboveground. After packing dirt around roots, mulch with 3" of hay or other evergreen branches. Check with your local nursery for specific care related to your climate conditions.



## RECYCLE CHRISTMAS TREES

Some communities recycle Christmas trees by chipping and mulching them for compost or landscaping materials. Trees must be free of tinsel, decorations, nails, tacks or any other foreign materials. Check with your town office to see if a tree-recycling program exists in your area. Recycle tree trunks for firewood or split for kindling. Use branches as mulch under acid-loving bushes and shrubs, such as rhododendrons or evergreens.

## OLD BATTERIES

There are two major types of batteries used in appliances and toys — single use batteries and rechargeable batteries. The rechargeable batteries typically are nickel-cadmium and should not be discarded into regular household trash when they no longer hold a charge. Many retail and hardware stores such as Wal-Mart, Home Depot, and Radio Shack will accept these used batteries for recovery and recycling. The single use batteries, such as the alkaline ones, no longer contain high amounts of mercury and may be disposed of in household trash when they are exhausted.

## DONATE REPLACED ITEMS TO CHARITY

New gifts will often replace appliances and clothes that still have a useful life. Collect these items and donate them to Goodwill, Salvation Army, local churches, daycare centers or charity groups. See if your town has a "bargain barn" or "swap shop."

## RECYCLE CARDBOARD BOXES

The holiday season creates a tremendous amount of cardboard waste. Be sure to separate corrugated cardboard, bundle it and take it to your local recycling center. Check first to see if your local area accepts cardboard and how it should be prepared.

## REDUCE, REUSE, AND RECYCLE GIFT WRAP

- Just add bows to holiday shopping bags or gift boxes instead of wrapping.
- Buy gift-wrap made from recycled paper. Avoid wrapping paper with foil highlights, as it cannot be recycled.
- Only use the amount of wrap that you need. Loop string around gift boxes, the out on paper to determine how much to cut.
- Wrap gifts in brown paper bags or newspaper; use the cartoon section for brighter colors.
- Wrap gifts in festive holiday fabric, dishtowels or bandannas, which can simply be washed and reused.
- Give gifts in baskets, tins, or jars.
- Save bows, ribbons and paper to reuse next year. Shred wrapping paper to use as filler or instead of tissue.



## **REUSE HOLIDAY DECORATIONS**

- Save your holiday decorations for reuse next year.
- Donate decorations to local schools, churches, town offices, or nonprofit organizations.
- Use natural ornaments such as pinecones, shells, dried flowers or berries.

## **TIPS FOR HOLIDAY SHOPPING**

- When shopping, use reusable canvas bags to carry purchases rather than paper bags. Refuse a bag for small purchases. Ask for the box the product came in or get a clothing box for the item instead of collecting both a box and a bag.
- Choose products that are minimally packaged. If a toy has several layers of paper and plastic packaging, choose a similar product that leaves less waste.
- Purchase items made of natural materials like wood rather than plastic. Better yet, choose items made from recycled materials.

## **TIPS FOR MAIL-ORDER SHOPPING**

- Ask mail-order companies who ship your holiday gifts not to use polystyrene packing peanuts, but to use paper instead.
- Save bubble wrap or “peanuts” for reuse.
- Recycle those “peanuts” at businesses like Mail Boxes Etc.
- After you have completed your mail shopping, remove your name from catalogue mailing lists by writing to: Mail Preference Service, Direct Marketing Association, PO Box 9008, Farmingdale, NY 11735-9008.

## **TIPS FOR GIVING**

Be prudent and practical as well as thoughtful and creative. Purchase gifts that are long-lasting or that can be reused and later recycled. Avoid “gag gifts” - they quickly become trash. Secondhand or antique shops are great places to do holiday shopping. Consider giving gift certificates or tickets for services or special events, rather than purchasing an item that may not be used or needed.

## **TIPS FOR HOLIDAY PARTIES**

- Use cloth napkins, silverware, glass drinking cups and ceramic coffee mugs, and reusable plates rather than disposable plastic dinnerware, cups, and plastic products.
- Rent party furnishings rather than buying things that you will only use once a year.
- Reuse plastic margarine tubs or yogurt containers to store holiday leftovers.

## **REUSE HOLIDAY CARDS**

- Cut the picture side of the card off and reuse it as a card, postcard, or gift tag.
- You can also send the picture side of cards to: St. Judes Ranch for Children, PO Box 985, Boulder City, NV 89005, where the cards are used for fundraising.
- Recycle cards that can't be reused.

## ***USE THIS INFORMATION IN YOUR COMMUNITY!!!***

*If you would like to distribute these Holiday Waste Reduction & Recycling Tips directly to your residents, simply insert your community information here and photocopy on colorful paper. You can then distribute the sheets at local businesses and the Town Office, or you could even do a mailing to residents. You can also reach the community by submitting these tips, along with your local information, to the local newspaper and/or radio station. Be sure to include details on Christmas tree recycling opportunities, collection schedules, whether you accept wrapping paper for recycling, and other holiday recycling information.*